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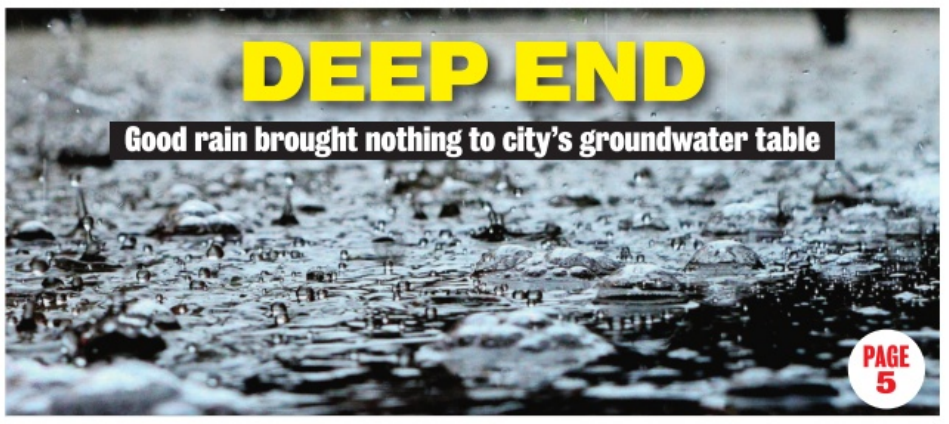
Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 29 | Min 19 | Humidity 61% Mostly Cloudy Sensex 65,322 | Nifty 19,428 | Gold 58,906 | Silver 69,967 | Dollar 82.96 | Euro 90.96 | GBP 105.31



Sampangi Rama Nagar has good-quality area name boards already. So what? If BBMP decides to install new boards adjacent to the old ones, it will do so

DOUBLE VISION

Citizens say new boards of inferior quality, activists call exercise a scam

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

For every requirement of the citizen, pat comes the fund-crunch excuse. In such a scenario, we expect the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to spend tax-payers' money prudently for developmental work in the city. But check this out and decide for yourself, how prudently has your money been spent. Installation of name boards was taken up at crossroads and the main road of Sampangi Rama Nagar in Shivajinagar Assembly constituency. No issue with that, but the roads already have perfectly legible name boards in place already.

Residents of Sampangi Rama Nagar complain that the BBMP officials took up the unnecessary works thus wasting tax-payers' money. They also said that the sub-standard works serve no purpose other than helping the BBMP ward engineer and the contractor. They said that the ward engineer took the decision to install the name boards without consulting the stakeholders.

"The name boards were installed a few months ago. Actually, there is no need for installing the new name boards as the existing name

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"No one has appealed to the BBMP to install the name boards in the area. One of the new name boards installed on the 3rd Main is already removed and kept away

– Resident of the area

Traffic not fine, but fines keep rolling in

As police rake in Rs 163 cr in 6 months of this year for traffic violations, citizens crave enforcement on the roads

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Bengaluru traffic cops collected a fine of Rs 163 crore in six months for violations under the Motor Vehicles Act.

According to the traffic police data, the city recorded 51 lakh violations as of June, 2023. Out of the 51 lakh cases, 96 percent were through contactless enforcement, amounting to 50 lakh cases. Only around 1,60,000 cases are by contact enforcement.

However, when it comes to collecting fines, the contactless and contact method doesn't vary much in terms of numbers. The police collected Rs 79 crore through contact method and Rs 84 crore through contactless enforcement.

While the police are focusing on using technology for catching violators, residents complain they don't see policemen on the road anymore.

"There's huge gap in the requirement vs on-field requirement of the workforce. Seems like the traffic police works only for issuing challans and not for actual traffic management in decongesting traffic, even in high-traffic zones. So that number still is pretty low considering their absence

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Freedom fest

Experience an unforgettable Independence Day celebration with your dear ones. Join the grandest event of freedom and enjoyment, featuring Live Music, Bonfire, Original Texan BBQ, a variety of Multi-cuisine Food, Photo Booth Stand-up Comedy, Mimicry performances, Choreography displays, Bouncy Castle, engaging Pottery sessions and a whole lot more.
Where: The Crossroad Bangalore
When: August 15, 4 pm onwards

02 Mindful Mandala

Unleash your creativity at our Mandala Workshop. Join us for a serene and hands-on experience as you learn to create intricate and beautiful mandala art. Explore the art of mindfulness through patterns and colours.
Where: Dialogues Cafe, JP Nagar
When: August 15, 12 pm

03 Tantric Tales

Don't miss the unique blend of horror and comedy in 'Tantric Tales: Wrath of the Wraith'. Follow the captivating journey of three Tantrics, Anali, Manja, and Suraiya, as they navigate their quirky bond during an exorcism. Join us for a gripping story of healing, growth, and family.
Where: Ranga Shankara; When: August 17, 7.30 pm

BU shortens wait for supplementary exams

Students will no longer have to wait a whole year to get another shot at it

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PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

BU decides to follow the SSLC and PU model by conducting supplementary exams within a month of the main exam

In a significant development, Bangalore University has shortened the wait for supplementary exams. Students who haven't passed their exams will no longer have to wait a whole year for the exams. The university has decided to follow the SSLC and PU model, allowing supplementary exams to be conducted within a month of the main exams. This change provides students with an additional opportunity to pass their exams promptly.

Professor SM Jayakar, the Vice-Chancellor of BU, elaborated on the rationale behind this decision. He stated, "Final-year students often need to pursue further courses or jobs. If a student fails in a few subjects, they would otherwise lose a valuable year. To prevent this, we are introducing supplementary exams." The university's highest decision-making body, the syndicate, recently approved this new approach. This scheme is particularly beneficial for fifth and sixth-semester students and is set to take effect in the 2023-24 academic year.

With 269 affiliated colleges, BU sees around 1 lakh students sitting for exams each semester, and the failure rate stands at approximately 20%. Prior to BU's decision, Visvesvaraya Technological University had already adopted a similar strategy. An official confirmed that the final exams for the 2023 batch have concluded, evaluation is underway, and results are expected to be released in September. Students who do not pass these exams will be able to take the makeup exam in October.

This initiative has been welcomed by students like Naresh D, who expressed, "In the past, students appearing for SSLC exams had to wait for a year for supplementary exams, a duration later reduced to six months. However, even if a student passed the supplementary exams within six months, they were ineligible to pursue the next course and would end up wasting a whole year. This led the government to introduce supplementary exams within a month, allowing students who passed the supplementary exams to take up the first PU (in the case of SSLC) in the same year, thereby preventing unnecessary delays. For II PU supplementary exams, students were even given an opportunity to take up CET for a few years after passing the supplementary exams. This was a commendable move. Regrettably, such a provision did not exist at Bangalore University until now. Thankfully, we now have this scheme, which is undoubtedly a great boon for students."

> **"Students appearing for SSLC exams had to wait for a year for supplementary exams, a duration that was reduced later** – Naresh D, a student

Professional courses costly

The cost of professional education continues its upward trajectory. In the academic year 2023-24, students aiming for private unaided engineering colleges face fees ranging from Rs 69,000 to Rs 76,000 under the CET quota. Those seeking enrolment via COMEDK counselling in private engineering institutions will bear costs spanning from Rs 1.69 lakh to Rs 2.37 lakh. On the medical education front, securing a CET quota seat demands Rs 1, 28,746, while the private quota incurs a fee of Rs 10, 80,152. Last year, the expense for a medical seat stood at Rs 9.81 lakh.

Concerns are being raised by parents who believe the escalating costs of engineering and medical seats will burden them, . Students also point out that the expenses associated with medical or engineering education through CET don't end there, as several colleges impose additional miscellaneous fees during admission. Private engineering colleges can legally charge an extra fee of Rs 20,000, a provision that some colleges exploit by charging between Rs 50,000 and Rs 1 lakh.

Gear up for I-Day extravaganza at Parade Grounds

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As a yearly tradition, the Manekshaw parade grounds are set to host the Independence Day celebrations. Extensive arrangements, including the deployment of 100 CCTV cameras, installation of 2 bag scanners, provision of ambulances, and ensuring hospital bed availability nearby, have been meticulously made. The event details were elaborated upon by the police commissioner and the BBMP chief during a press conference. Notably, on August 15th, traffic along Cubbon Road, stretching from the BRV junction to the Kamaraj Road junction, will be brought to a halt between 8 am and 11 am. Commuters will need to use alternative routes during this time.

City Police Commissioner B. Dayananda said, "The police have made arrangements for the people attending the parade, including parking facilities. For the flag hoisting and cultural program, 9-10 DCPs, ACPs, and inspectors will be participating. CCTV cameras and baggage scanners have been installed around the Manekshaw ground premises. Instructions regarding the entrance gate have been provided to the public. We urge people to arrive by 8:30, as the roads might need to be closed for the Chief Minister's arrival afterward. 30 platoons will partake in the march past, including KSRP, BSF, CRPF, and KSISF. As usual, we have a special team joining us, this time from the Goa state police. Other participating teams include the Bangalore police, Bangalore traffic police, Bangalore police women's wing, Bharat Scouts and Guides, and 10 schools." Arrangements, including shamianas, stage setup, and seating arrangements, have been finalised for the guests. The Chief Minister is expected to arrive at the location by 8:55 in the morning. The heads of the Air Force, Navy, and Army will also be present.

KAUSHIK JN

BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said, "As the 77th Independence Day approaches, we have completed all preparations. The Chief Minister will inaugurate the event at 9 with the flag hoisting, followed by a 45-minute speech."

Check, check, fire-safety testing

With no emergency exit and patchy fire-fighting equipment, BBMP's multi-storied annex building fails safety test miserably

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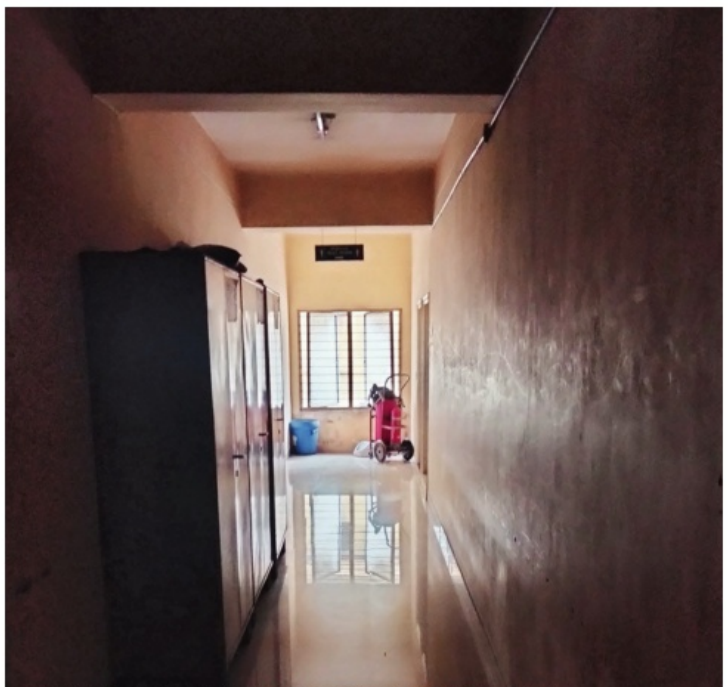
Two major fire mishaps took place at Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) offices, one at its West Zone office and the other one at its Head Office, in a span of 12 years. The BBMP officials will, as usual, forget about the mishaps after their customary knee jerk reaction. Here is an example to come to this conclusion on the apathy of the BBMP to ensure fire safety for hundreds of their employees working at one of the annex buildings that was inaugurated at the BBMP Head Office within a year of the major fire mishap that took place at the BBMP West Zone Office.

It was said that many documents, especially those from one particular ward, were destroyed in the fire mishap at the BBMP West Office in July 2011. The mishap should have made BBMP understand the need to ensure that its buildings are fire safety compliant. But, neither the BBMP engineers from multi-purpose department nor the elected representatives, including the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Ministers who inaugurated the annex building on the BBMP Head Office, bothered to inspect it or enquire with the BBMP engineers whether the newly constructed multi-storied high-rise building is fire safety compliant.

The annex building was inaugurated by the then Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, in the presence of his two deputy chief ministers R Ashok and KS Eshwarappa and the then major D Venkatesh Murthy, on August 14, 2012. The BBMP shifted many of its departments, including animal husbandry, traffic engineering cell, lakes and forest, to the annex building.

Many employees feel that they are not sure about their safety if a fire mishap takes place at this building as the six-floor structure has no fire exit. The employees have no opportunity even to rush to the top (roof) of the structure due to a temporary structure put up on it.

"There is no safety for hundreds of employees working at the annex building. We had told the engineers about the need to ensure the building is fire safety compliant but it was completed without the much-needed fire exit



The narrow corridor at the annex building of the BBMP is a dangerous space for the employees to make a run for it in case of an emergency; A fire extinguisher is installed at the entrance but there is no clarity on when its expiry date was

One cannot even ask the officials of the department why the multi-storied structure has no fire exit because most who worked in 2012 have either retired or have been transferred. BBMP has to on its own take an initiative to ensure structures constructed on the BBMP Head Office premises are compliant of all norms including fire safety.

BBMP Officers' and Employees' Association president Amruth Raj said the annex building was constructed more than a decade ago. "There is no safety for hundreds of employees working at the annex building. We have told the multi-purpose department engineers about the need to ensure the building is fire safety compliant but the structure was completed and inaugurated without the much-needed fire exit," said Amruth Raj.

A BBMP employee on the condition of anonymity, said the engineers responsible for the construction of the building did not bother to follow norms. "It is surprising that no fire officer visited the annex building for inspection. I hope the fire officers will inspect the building and direct the BBMP to install the fire exit (stairs) on the rear side of the building," said the employee.

Another employee said that most of the fire extinguishers and equipment installed on the BBMP Head Office premises have no data on the date of filling and the next date of refilling. "What is the use of installing fire extinguishers without training employees on how to use the fire extinguishers in case of a fire?" asks the employee.

Apartment complex gripped by 'Apple con'

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Several residents of Prestige Tranquility located in Mandur have fallen prey to a scam deal that was posted on their apartment management software. The post, allegedly made by a resident of the same apartment complex, claimed to give away Apple products and gold at 40% discounts.

A resident of Bhartiya City told BM he was the first to come across the ad placed on their apartment group about two months ago. "I contacted the woman and she said it was a genuine post and that many had already brought the items from her. She said she runs an NGO so they get coupons at discounted prices from the stores. She said proceeds from the sale are used for the NGO."

The resident smelt a rat and asked to meet the woman. Though initially hesitant, she agreed to meet. "When we met, she asked me to pay Rs 50,000 in advance. I understood that it was a scam and alerted the residents of Bhartiya City."

However, a few months later, the same message was put up at the apartment software of Prestige Tranquility continuously for a week. This time, purported bills of earlier purchases were also posted. Many people got interested and reached out to the woman. Some made advance payments and lost their money. Residents alleged that the woman who scammed them was staying in the same apartment complex.

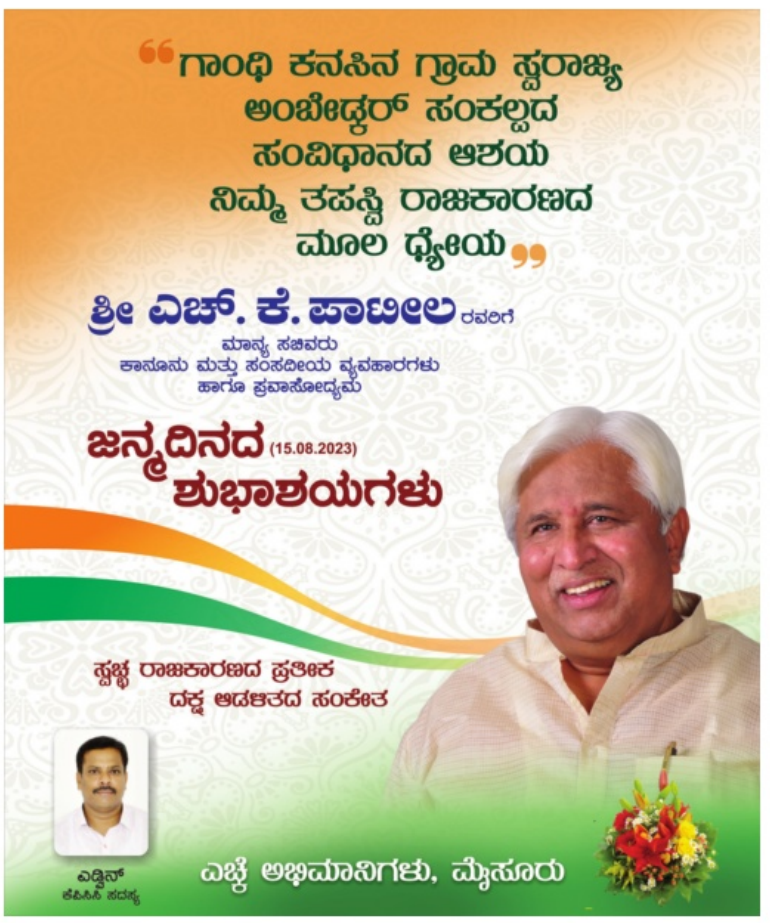
Nishanth Tiwari, a resident of Prestige Tranquility narrated his story. "I didn't believe her story of working for the NGO and discount coupons so she called me to the apartment to speak. When I went to her house, she has some Apple products and gold coins with her. While I was there, another man came to accept the delivery and she gave him gold. I felt, this was a trap to make us believe her story and didn't want to fall for it."

But she kept hankering him later too. "She said me to meet someone at Garuda mall working at an electronics company. I met this person, who assured me that they had the voucher system and we could get the products on discount. She said the cost of Apple Macbook Pro was Rs 1.29 lakh, which would be given at Rs 45,000. I was asked to pay 25,000 in advance and told that I would get delivery in two days. But I didn't get it."

Tiwari reached out to the woman, who said the employee he met at the mall would deliver the laptop. She also said her daughter was sick so could he pay the remaining Rs 20,000. Tiwari made the entire payment. After this, the man turned his phone off and wasn't available at the mall. The woman stopped answering calls. "I reached out to her house multiple times and she said the man had run off with the laptop. She said she would return the money. I waited for a month and yet did not receive it. Last week she gave me a cheque but it bounced. When we posted about the incident, we got to know that others too had been conned," said Tiwari.

Joji, president of the apartment complex association, said, "As many people started to report about the incident, we are assuming that together residents have lost close to Rs 30 lakh."

Over nine residents filed a complaint with the Avalahalli police and an a NCR was registered. "The woman was warned to pay back the entire amount. She has been given 15 days. A thorough probe is needed as it looks like many people are involved in the scam?" said Joji.



Dispute over damaged KEB line under scrutiny

Resident alleges BESCOM demanded ₹15,000 for KEB line damages

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An RT Nagar resident has alleged that BESCOM demanded Rs 15,000 for damages to the KEB line underground undertaken by BWSSB, and the private contractor asked to split half the expenses. Citizens are questioning why authorities aren't taking accountability.

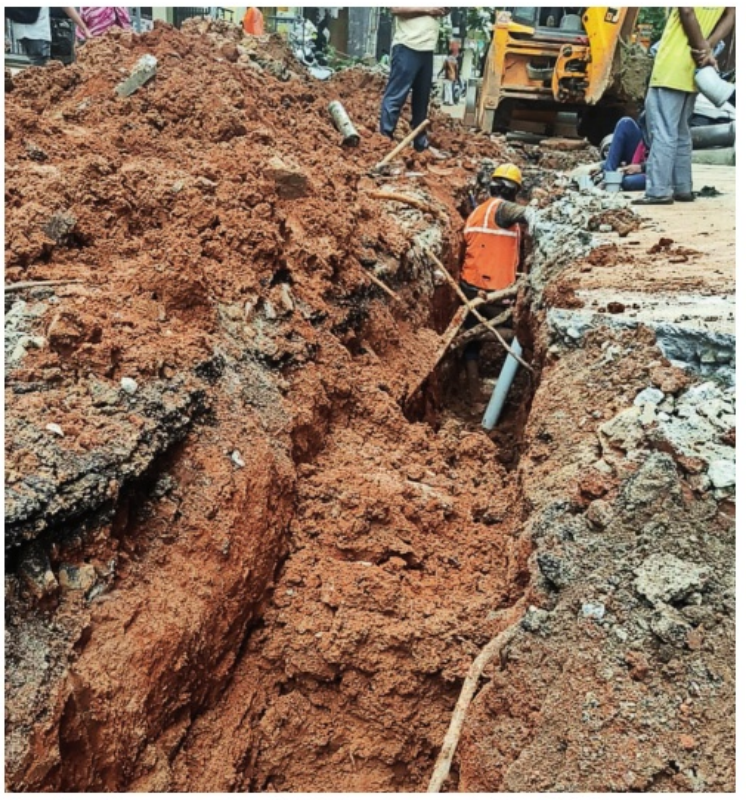
Highlighting a recurring issue of inadequate coordination among parastatal agencies, a situation arose when BWSSB work led to damage to the KEB line, compelling residents to engage in a struggle to rectify the situation. Furthermore, the agencies asked the resident to pay for the repairs out of his pocket.

It took nearly a day of no electricity and haggling with the private contractor to restore power in RT Nagar. After the private contractor, responsible for BWSSB work, damaged the resident's KEB line, BESCOM allegedly asked for Rs 15,000 for repairs. The private contractor, on the other hand, demanded that the resident pay for half of the expenses.

Speaking to BM, Dheeraj, a resident of 7th Cross, HMT Layout, RT Nagar, said, "Officials from BWSSB started digging the road at around 10:30 in the morning on August 10. While digging, the earth mover hit the KEB cable running from the transformer to my house. I had no power for nearly a day, and BESCOM told me to pay out of my pocket to get the repairs done. Later, the private contractor agreed to make the repairs, but he asked me to split the expenses in half," he added.

Residents are questioning why they have to beg officials to fix the mistakes made by parastatal agencies due to their lack of coordination. "When digging up the road, they need to be careful in conducting work and need to promptly rectify mistakes," he added. He also mentioned that expenses will have to be incurred to fix the front side of the gate.

> **"When digging up the road, they need to be careful in conducting work and need to promptly rectify the mistakes**
>
> – Dheeraj, a resident



The situation arose when BWSSB work damaged the KEB line, compelling residents to engage in a struggle to rectify the situation

Civic activists feel that the digitisation of information and making it public is the only solution to the lack of coordination between the agencies. "There is no coordination between these agencies, which is a significant problem in the city. It is also a violation of the 74th Amendment, which states that they should be integrated under the city government. However, the lack of transparency paves the way for corruption. On one hand, these agencies are inefficient, and on the other hand, they are operating without a common platform. Only when they dig up a road, a cable is found. Ideally, KGIS can maintain all GIS information for all parastatal agencies. It seems like the IT capital of the country is not keen on utilising Information Technology. All the work undertaken by the state government is 50 years behind. All such data should be available online and accessible to the public, as its all public data," said Sandeep Anirudhan, a civic activist.

Golden career, golden insights of Anant Nag

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Celebrating his golden jubilee career, veteran actor Anant Nag shares his perspective that husbands don't need to disclose everything to their spouses, be it their actions or intentions. Anant Nag, who starred in the Kannada film "Hendthighelbedi" (Not to tell wife) over three decades ago, expressed this notion while responding to a question from actor Ramesh Aravind. The conversation was during a felicitation event organised by Raghavendra Chitravani at MMB Legacy on Sunday. Anant Nag momentarily hesitated before candidly sharing his viewpoint in the presence of his wife, Gayatri, who was seen smiling while her husband navigated through his response.

"A husband should not tell everything to his wife. He has to be prudent about what to tell and what not to tell his wife. He should not confess everything to his wife," said Anant Nag while looking at his wife, Gayatri. Thanking the almighty and the Kannada people for encouraging and supporting him all these years, Anant Nag revealed that he preferred theatre over higher education as he was not good at academics. "After completing high school, I went to Mumbai to pursue higher studies, but I could not continue. As a science student, I was supposed to dissect frogs, cockroaches, and other insects in the laboratory. I used to take help from my classmates. How long could I depend on them? I had to do it on my own during the examination. So I discontinued college and joined theatre," said Anant Nag.

Veteran actor Anant Nag in conversation with Ramesh Aravind during a felicitation

The veteran actor recalled how his mother used to chide him for imitating guests at home. "I was good at imitating guests. I used to imitate them in their presence. My mother used to keep an eye on me and chide me whenever I imitated guests," he said. Stating that memory power is necessary, he said that memory loss is also very important for human beings to lead a happy life. "It is good to have memory power to remember good memories, and it is also important for human beings to have memory loss because we have to forget unpleasant incidents," he said.

Commenting on the present generation, he said that the current generation, including politicians, lacks patience. "Most of the youth and politicians have no patience. They want everything to happen instantly.

For example, the new government came into power in the state three months ago. It is quite amusing to see the new government in a hurry to become or play the Opposition within three months," he says with a smile.

He claimed that he has been an amiable person and never gets angry with his wife at home. However, Gayatri begged to differ from her husband. "He may look handsome and amiable, but the reality is that he gets angry at the drop of a hat. He quarrels with me frequently for one reason or another," reveals Gayatri, advising Ramesh Aravind to verify this with her husband.

However, Anant Nag made it clear with whom he could quarrel if not with his wife. "I can quarrel with those who are very close to my heart," he says with a smile and admiration.

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9591233247

Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Precarious road

Prakruthi Nagar

The road on Kogilu Area Street near First Step School, Prakruthi Nagar, poses danger for children, especially during rain, and can be hazardous for pregnant women.

Neglected footpath

Infantry Road

The poor state of the footpath developed under the smart city project on Plain Street, off Infantry Road.

Road woes

Rajaji Nagar

Road neglect persists in the area between Navrang Theatre and Harishchandra Ghat. Though the chamber is fixed, the poor condition of the road remains.

'Allowing children to drive or ride is violation of their rights'

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Child rights activists have questioned the practice of allowing children to drive or ride on the roads and termed it a violation of their rights.

Activist Vasudev Sharma told BM, "Children can learn to drive or ride under parental supervision but should be permitted to use the roads. Allowing children to drive and ride on roads without a licence is a big crime. Parents allowing these practices are pushing their children into difficulties."

He added that as per Motor Vehicle Act, to get a learning licence kids need to cross a certain age. "Driving licences are not just the authority to drive but also hold responsibility over the driver. The driver is responsible for the consequences of driving. For example, if someone falls while driving and breaks their leg or dies in an accident, they are responsible. If another vehicle hits them, they are responsible for it. In many government proceedings, children are only considered to be responsible after 18 years. Till then, the guardians or parents are responsible for the well-being of the child. Minors may not be able to take split-second judgement required to make safe decisions. In case of accidents involving minors, the owners of the vehicle are held responsible," he added.

If a minor is caught riding/driving, owner of vehicle is held liable

In case of grave injuries, children become a liability not just to parents but also to society at large and the government, said the activist.

He urged parents not to encourage children to drive and restrain them from using vehicles before the age. Sharma also spoke about the recent fatal accident involving a 13-year-old racing biker at a championship in Chennai. "In the case of the child prodigy bike racer who passed away, it might be said that he was given permission. However, we need to question if special licences issued to children makes it safe for them," he added.

He further raised concerns about educational institutions allowing children to bring vehicles to the premises. "Schools should strictly prohibit children from bringing vehicles into campus. Children are seen driving into school campuses which means school authorities are allowing the vehicles in."

Activists say that if minors are found flouting the rules, traffic officials should confiscate their vehicles and call their parents. A case must be filed against the parents for negligence, an activist suggested.

Ground reality: It rained, but where is the water?

Water table dipped by 4 mt in July in comparison to last year despite good rain in the month

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Although Bengaluru experienced copious rainfall last month, groundwater levels in the city are witnessing a steady decline. In July, the water table in many areas of Bengaluru dropped by nearly four meters compared to the same period last year.

Despite substantial rainfall in the past month, Bengaluru is grappling with a consistent decrease in its groundwater levels. In July, the water table across various parts of the city plummeted by nearly four metres in comparison to the same period in the previous year.

According to the monthly groundwater report by the Ground Water Directorate, when compared with July 2022's average groundwater level data, levels in Bengaluru North and Bengaluru South have decreased by more than four meters below ground level. The report indicates that groundwater in Bengaluru North is now accessible at depths of 20-30 metres below ground level, while in Bengaluru South, it is available at depths of 10-20 meters below ground level.

Experts explain that Bengaluru's rapidly depleting water table is due to higher extraction rates than recharge rates. Shubha Ramachandran, the water team lead at Biome Environmental Trust, points out that while the city extracts nearly 400 million litres per day equivalent of groundwater, the recharge rate is not equal. Unless we reverse this trend by ensuring we recharge more groundwater than we extract, we cannot expect an improvement in the water table.

Experts also highlight that while the Ground Water Directorate's report measures water levels in shallow aquifers, most of the extraction occurs from deep aquifers through borewells.

Bengaluru's depleting water table has been attributed to higher extraction rates than recharge rates

> **A city like Bengaluru needs at least a million recharge structures with a diameter of at least three feet and a depth of 20-30 feet**
>
> –Shubha Ramachandran, Biome Environmental Trust

"In shallow aquifers, water is usually found at depths of 20 to 30 metres, supplying open wells. However, this is not the layer from which most extraction occurs in Bengaluru. Borewells access deep aquifers, and monitoring fluctuations in these deep aquifers is crucial for a complete picture. Additionally, the location of monitoring stations must be analysed, as groundwater levels vary significantly based on monitoring points. For instance, if measured close to a lake, the level will be higher," said Ramachandran.

Experts stress that this data needs to be correlated with Bengaluru's water demand, and to achieve this, the amount of groundwater extraction must be measured. They also note that during the rainy season, many basements in the city flood, and significant amounts of water are pumped out, affecting the water table. Furthermore, underground structures like roads and railway lines reduce aquifer area and impact groundwater flow, resulting in rising water levels up gradient and dropping levels down gradient. These changes can lead to basement flooding, soil salinization, root rot in plants, and decreased building foundation stability.

Studies have shown that a significantly large volume of water is wasted during flooding events. In this context, BBMP bylaws need to be enforced, and basement structures should not be constructed in areas with high water tables. Additionally, we must reconsider underground linear infrastructure projects such as tunnel roads and the underground metro. The ground beneath us consists of permeable soil that acts like a sponge, retaining water. Such projects could potentially lead to a reduction in the overall aquifer capacity," said a city-based groundwater expert.

With nearly 80% of the city's surface covered in concrete, experts suggest that implementing recharge structures and monitoring groundwater extraction are critical steps to improve the water table. "For a city like Bengaluru, we need at least a million recharge structures with a diameter of at least three feet and a depth of 20-30 feet. But, estimates suggest we have only created around 2.5 lakh recharge structures across the city so far," adds Ramachandran.

Re-evaluate parameters for drought: CM to Centre

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has written a letter to Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar, asking the Centre to re-evaluate the current parameters for declaring drought declaration by the state governments, the Chief Minister's Office posted the letter on X, formerly Twitter.

The CM, in the letter to the central government, said the state has in recent years witnessed unprecedented challenges and adverse weather conditions, mainly driven by climate change. The increasing frequency and intensity of droughts have had severe consequences, including crop failures, water scarcity, and socio-economic hardships for rural communities.

In the current South West Monsoon season, Karnataka, he said, has recorded 34 per cent lower rainfall.

Owing to strict parameters for declaration of drought, farmers were unable to get any government support such as input subsidy, even though the late arrival of monsoon has impacted planting, he contended.

"Despite drought-like conditions in several Taluks we have not been able to meet the existing parameters for declaring drought, which is leaving our farmers without critical support such as input subsidy required in the event of failure to commence sowing operations /mid-season crop failure after sowing due to weak rains apart from other drought management/mitigation measures as set out in the Manual," he said.

The Manual for Drought Management-2016 was updated in 2020 for the declaration of drought by the State governments.

"The current one-size-fits-all approach to drought declaration is not capturing the nuances and variations in different regions," he wrote in the letter, asserting it was important to develop region-specific criteria that consider local ecological factors, water availability, and agricultural practices. He said that it was essential to recognize that each State and the regions within have their unique challenges and needs. **–ANI**

Power outages have left several in state in the dark

Consumers outraged by power cuts, tariff hikes after the launch of Gruha Jyothi Scheme

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TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Hydel units that play an important role in power generation face challenges to meet the increased demand

When the State Government introduced the Gruha Jyothi scheme, many questioned Energy Minister KJ George about the possibility of intermittent power cuts due to increased demand. At that time, the Minister reassured that Karnataka possessed surplus power and there would be no power shortages. However, merely a month after launching the Gruha Jyothi scheme, several regions across the state are experiencing unexpected power outages. Interestingly, while unscheduled power cuts are typical during the summer months, unfortunately, this time they are occurring during the rainy season.

Numerous complaints have flooded in from consumers who have been affected by these unscheduled power cuts, often at peak usage hours. Sources indicate that the hydel units, which play a vital role in power generation, are under immense strain to meet the increased demand.

Officials from KPTCL (Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited) explained that none of the hydel units has reached optimal capacity due to the ongoing lack of rain. Typically, during the rainy season, there is reduced power demand, particularly from farmers. However, as the rains recede and farmers begin utilising pump sets, the demand for power rises. With August experiencing inadequate rainfall, the demand for power has surged. Karnataka's ten hydel power generation stations are producing 42 million units. If the rain situation doesn't improve, there could be a power shortage next year, as reservoir levels will remain low. For instance, Linganamakki's water storage is below 50%, Varahi stands at a mere 35%, and Supa at 50%. The only hope now rests on a revival of rainfall in August and September.

> **Those exceeding 200 units, ESCOMs should approach the KERC to revise the tariff, as we are paying the full bill, and it's unjust to subject us to higher rates**
>
> Anil R, a Yeshwanthpur resident

Simultaneously, the increase in power tariff, which was implemented following a Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) order a few months ago, has fueled discontent among power consumers. A concerned reader stated, "Consumers using over 200 units of power are burdened with a hefty bill, as per the KERC order, charging Rs 7 per unit for consumption beyond 100 units. We exceed 200 units, and although we don't qualify for the Gruha Jyothi scheme, it's unfair to impose higher rates on us. Additionally, the fuel adjustment charges have escalated significantly. For instance, in the June bill, FAC added Rs 100.35, while the July bill saw an increase to Rs 475.55. This substantial increase will undoubtedly impact our finances." Anil R, a Yeshwanthpur resident, remarked, "The government offers free power to Gruha Jyothi registered consumers using less than 200 units. The government reimburses the power bill to the ESCOMs. Therefore, for those exceeding 200 units, ESCOMs should approach the KERC to revise the tariff, as we are paying the full bill, and it's unjust to subject us to higher rates."

"We have been told by the government that Karnataka is a power surplus state and hence there is no need for power cuts. However, we have been facing numerous power cuts on a daily basis. If we have excess power, then why are consumers penalised in the form of power cuts? I feel that a provision should be brought in where the ESCOMs should be penalised for power cuts and not providing round-the-clock power", said Dinesh Kumar, a techie.

MDMA from city seized in Mangaluru

In a major operation, the city crime branch police (CCB) on Sunday arrested three drug peddlers and confiscated 170 grams of MDMA in a recent operation near Bondel in the city.

The arrested have been identified as Imran (36) of Moodushedde, Amjad Khan (42) from Udupi and Abdul Basheer Abbas (39) from Manjanady, disclosed by the city police Commissioner Kuldeep Kumar R Jain to the reporters.

Acting on a reliable tip-off indicating that Imran, along with his associates, was indulging in the sale of MDMA near Bondel Padushedde, the CCB team led by ACP P A Hegde carried out this planned operation. The three accused had allegedly procured the MDMA from Bengaluru.

Police also confiscated five MDMA pills, a vehicle, six mobile phones and a digital weighing scale from the arrested persons. The total estimated value of the seized assets is Rs 14.76 lakh.

The Commissioner said more persons are suspected to be involved in the drug trafficking racket and the crackdown on such activities will continue. **–PTI**

'Rowdy sheets' against road rage offenders

Bengaluru police commissioner B Dayananda stated that a rowdy sheet will be launched on those responsible for incidents of road rage. Thanks to the dash cams within the automobile, numerous incidences of road rage have been shared on social media during the last few months.

"Officers have been instructed to open 'rowdy sheets' on such unscrupulous elements indulging in road rage or extortion activities," the commissioner responded to a user on social networking platform X.

Two miscreants were recently observed in Whitefield's Siddapura stopping the automobile in the middle of the road and making a scene. Two bikers attempted to assault the driver of the automobile in a viral video that showed them pursuing it. The two suspects were eventually detained by Bengaluru police. **–BMB**

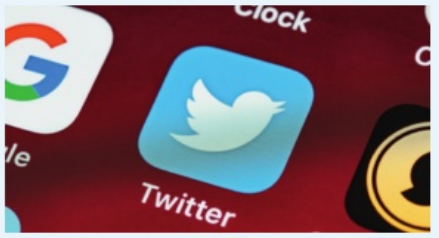
NOTES FROM THE FIELD

CM's birthday: That's an unsolved mystery

In a lively encounter with the media, when Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was greeted with birthday wishes from journalists, he revealed a surprising twist about his birthday celebrations. He brushed aside the notion of celebrating his birthday, stating that he has no need for such festivities. The CM disclosed that his actual date of birth remains a mystery to him, with conflicting dates in play. August 3 has been adopted as his birthday due to a school teacher's registration. "To this day, I'm uncertain about my true birth date, with two conflicting dates in play. So, I leave it to the people to decide when they want to celebrate," Siddaramaiah declared with a grin.

Retweet controversy sparks political debate

The recent fire incident at the BBMP office ignited a political controversy, as the Congress party's office initially tweeted that the fire was a plotted conspiracy, not an accident. However, the controversial tweet was quickly retracted within hours. Deputy Chief Minister DKS intervened, clarifying that the provocative message was sent by the social media team without his knowledge. Opposition BJP demanded a probe into the spreading of fake news, raising concerns about the incident's handling.



That's too much

In a curious turn of events, the line between accolades and exasperation blurred for the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Madhu Bangarappa. Initially basking in the glow of teacher associations' praises, Madhu's mood shifted as the number of well-wishers surged to overwhelming proportions. Despite his efforts to call a halt, his request fell on deaf ears, as the eager attendees were unwilling to waste the thoughtful gifts they had brought. Usually composed Madhu implored the crowd to disperse, emphasising his desire to achieve more than mere honours.

No brotherly feelings

During a recent press discourse, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar found himself addressing allegations of "commission" hurled at the government by contractors. In reference to the opposition leaders, he began with 'Kumaranna,' affectionately referring to Kumaraswamy as a brother. However, with a subtle shift, he acknowledged that he no longer possessed the privilege to address him as "anna" (big brother), opting for the more formal 'Kumaraswamy.' This reaction arose from former CM HD Kumaraswamy's disavowal of DKS as a brother, asserting that he never desired such a kinship in his lifetime.

Admirer rams in with a unique gift

Gifts of an extraordinary nature often find their way to ministers. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had previously stirred controversy by mentioning a gifted expensive watch. While the tumult has faded since then, a recent admirer named V Anjaneya journeyed from Raichur to gift Siddaramaiah a ram, adorned in a resplendent yellow cloth. Anjaneya, an ardent Siddaramaiah enthusiast, takes pride in showering such unique gifts upon the CM on a regular basis. **–Sridhar Vivan**

Green chip for AI
Tech major IBM has said that its prototype 'brain-like' chip could make AI more energy efficient

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Inside India's new digital personal data protection framework

A new law that defines how companies should process users' data came into force with the President giving assent to the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act passed by Parliament.

The law arms individuals with greater control over their data while allowing companies to transfer users' data abroad for processing, except to territories restricted by the Centre through notification. It also gives the government power to seek information from firms and issue directions to block content. While the new law seeks to establish a robust framework for the protection of personal data in the digital realm, it has drawn criticism over broad exemptions granted to state entities and some of its provisions diluting the landmark Right to Information (RTI) law.

Here are key takeaways from the freshly-minted law:

OBLIGATIONS OF DATA FIDUCIARY: Data fiduciaries, which are entities collecting and processing personal data, are required to obtain free, informed and unconditional consent from individuals before processing their data. Data must be deleted when its purpose has been fulfilled or consent is withdrawn. Entities must protect personal data in their possession by taking reasonable security safeguards to prevent a data breach, and alert Data Protection Board of India and affected persons when data breach occurs. A Data Fiduciary has to publish the contact information of a Data Protection Officer and establish an effective grievances redressal mechanism.

RIGHTS & DUTIES OF INDIVIDUALS: Individuals have the right to access the personal data collected about them and know with whom it has been shared. They can request the deletion, correction, or updating of their data. In case of grievance, they can approach such a mechanism set up by data fiduciaries. Their duties are: they cannot impersonate another individual while providing data, register a false complaint, or suppress material information. Breach of duties can be punishable with a penalty of up to Rs 10,000.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS: The government can restrict the transfer of personal data to certain countries for security and sovereignty reasons. It can also exempt certain classes of fiduciaries, including startups, from complying with specific provisions.

POWERS OF GOVT: The government can order the blocking of a data fiduciary after a hearing based on the recommendation of a Data Protection Board. Immunity from legal proceedings is extended to the central government, the board, its chairperson, and members.

APPLICABILITY: Personal data is defined as data about an individual. The norms will apply to personal data collected in digital form, from individuals in India, and personal data collected offline but digitised subsequently. It will also apply to processing outside India, if it has to do with offering goods or services to individuals in India. The Act does not apply to data processed by an individual for any domestic purpose, nor to data made publicly available by an individual.

PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA: Processing means activities related to digital personal data, including collection, storage, indexing, sharing, use, disclosure, dissemination and even erasure. Personal data can be processed only for a lawful purpose for which an individual has given consent and for certain legitimate uses. For consent, notice has to be given by a data fiduciary (data using entity) to the data principal (individual) describing the data and purpose to be processed.

CONSENT: Consent of individuals should be free, unambiguous, and clear affirmative action, agreeing to processing of personal data only for the specified purpose. This means even if consent is for other purposes, say where a telemedicine app seeks access to users' contact list, the consent will be considered to be limited only to the actual purpose of data being collected (telemedicine services). Consent can be withdrawn at any time.

PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA OF KIDS: DPDP mandates parental consent for processing of children's data. Data collecting entities cannot undertake processing of personal data that is likely to cause detrimental effect on the well-being of a child, nor can they undertake tracking or behavioural monitoring of children or targeted advertising directed at children. It defines a child as an individual who has not completed 18 years of age. However, the government can lower the age of consent for certain entities.

EXEMPTIONS: Exemptions are applicable in cases where processing of personal data is needed for prevention and probe of offences, enforcing legal rights or claims, merger or amalgamation, detecting financial frauds, among others.

PENALTIES: Failure to take reasonable security safeguards to prevent data breaches entails up to Rs 250 crore penalty, while non-fulfillment of obligations to give Board and individuals notice of data breach is of up to Rs 200 crore. The penalty for non-compliance of obligations pertaining to kids is up to Rs 200 crore.

CRITICISM: According to Internet Freedom Foundation, the new law seems to prioritise data processing over privacy protection, which contradicts the original intent of safeguarding individuals' rights. Also, the broad exemptions granted to state entities is of concern. The law does not contain any meaningful safeguards against "overbroad surveillance".

While opposition MPs and digital experts say the legislation would allow the government and its agencies to access user data from companies and personal data of individuals without their consent, the Editors Guild of India says it affects press freedom, creates an enabling framework for surveillance of citizens including of journalists and their sources, and dilutes the Right to Information law. **PTI**

BITS & BYTES

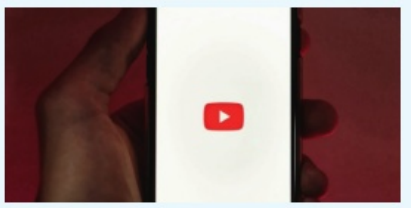
COMMUNITY CENTRE

Meta-owned messaging platform WhatsApp is rolling out community examples on iOS beta.

With this feature, beta users will now be provided with some examples on how to create a community on WhatsApp, reports WABetaInfo.

The shortcut redirects users to an official FAQ that gives them some instructions and tips about the community creation, the ability to add groups to the community, and how to reach community members by sharing updates using the special community announcement group. **IANS**

COUNTDOWN BEGINS

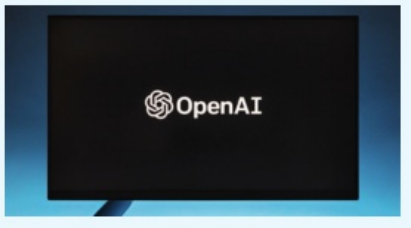


Google-owned YouTube is testing a countdown timer on ad-block warnings.

One YouTube user noticed the new timer in the popup's upper right corner, and later posted a screenshot on Reddit, reports Android Police. Another user in the comments also claimed to see this popup as well. While the duration of the countdown timer is not revealed, it is expected to be around 30 to 60 seconds.

Given that Google seems to be testing this feature with a limited number of accounts, some users may be fortunate enough to not encounter these popups at the moment. The platform had started to test the three-strikes policy for people using ad blockers in June. **IANS**

WRONG ANSWER AI



OpenAI's ChatGPT answered about 52 per cent software engineering questions incorrectly, according to a study, raising questions about the popular language models accuracy.

The team undertook a comprehensive analysis of ChatGPT's replies to 517 questions from Stack Overflow (SO).

"Our examination revealed that 52 per cent of ChatGPT's answers contain inaccuracies and 77 per cent are verbose," the researchers wrote in the paper, not peer-reviewed and published on a pre-print site. Importantly, the team found that 54 per cent of the time the errors were made due to ChatGPT not understanding the concept of the questions. **IANS**

96% cases booked via contactless method

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

on the roads. The problem actually lies with motorists too, everybody breaks the rules whenever given a chance, knowing that ultimately jams will catch up," said Naman, a citizen.

He, however, lauded the Public Eye app, but said its application was minimal. "It was a relief to know that when people like us spot a violation, we can raise/book a violation, but the on-ground application is minimal. In reality, no fines are ever raised, so it's just a tool to make the citizens believe that they are being heard, whereas there is no direct usage," he said.

Naman frequently takes the Benson-Cooke Town-Banaswadi-Lingarajapuram and adjacent areas and told BM that he hasn't spotted traffic police presence in the area in a while. "There's Bellary Road and Hebbal flyover, which are trouble spots. Banaswadi bridge too has become a pain," he added.

Another citizen M Murthy said that the traffic police are focused on certain offences like not wearing helmets and jumping traffic signals. Even when they are on the roads, they are focussed on particular issues rather than enforcing rules in a systematic manner. If they take into account every small violation, the safety on roads can be improved, he said.

> **"They are hiding behind trees and taking photos of people not wearing helmets and then they say that they have caught so many violators. But if there is any road rage incident, you can't even find a cop on the road**

"They are hiding behind trees and taking photos of people not wearing helmets and then they say that they have caught so many violators. But if there is any road rage incident, you can't even find a cop on the road," he added.

You don't have to visit bank to update your KYC; how to do it online

You are no longer required to visit the bank branches to update 'know you customer' (KYC) details if you have already submitted the valid documents and have not changed your address. If there is no change in your KYC information, you can submit a self-declaration through email-id, registered mobile number, ATMs, or any other digital channels.

In a circular dated January 5, 2023, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said, "As per the present guidelines, if there is no change in KYC information, a self-declaration to that effect from the individual customer is sufficient to complete the re-KYC process," read the circular from RBI dated January 5, 2023."

According to the said RBI circular, banks have "been advised to provide the facility of such a self-declaration to the individual customers through various non-face-to-face channels such as registered email-id, registered mobile number, ATMs, digital channels (such as online banking/internet banking, mobile application), letter, etc., without need for a visit to a bank branch."

FINANCE FUNDAS

How to update KYC details online

So if there is no change in address and the submitted KYC documents are still relevant, then you can submit a self-declaration to update your KYC. However "if there is only an address change, customers can furnish revised/updated addresses through any of these channels (mentioned above) after which, the bank would undertake verification of the declared address within two months," said the RBI in the circular.

However in some specific scenarios like if one's KYC document's validity has expired, or the submitted KYC document is no longer an officially valid document (OVD). In this case, one needs to physically visit the bank branch with documents listed on the current OVD list.

What happens if the KYC updation is not done?

If an individual does not comply with KYC updation rules, then he/she stands at risk of restriction on transactions and even temporary suspension of their banking account. Simply put, their bank account will be unusable for carrying out certain financial or non-financial transactions. However, before this adverse step is taken, the bank will inform the said customer who has not updated their KYC before the account is suspended.

Sometimes non-updating may lead to the closure of the account as well. According to an FAQ about KYC updation published by RBI, "If a customer having an existing account-based relationship with a regulated entity gives in writing to the regulated entity that he does not want to submit his Permanent Account Number or equivalent e-document thereof or Form No.60, a regulated entity shall close the account, and all obligations due about the account shall be appropriately settled after establishing the identity of the customer by obtaining the identification documents as applicable to the customer."

— Neelanjit Das, ET Online

BBMP's futile name game

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

boards are in good condition. The ward number (110) is the same on the old as well as the new name boards. Where was the need to install new name boards?" asks Ramalinga Reddy, a resident.

Coming down heavily on the BBMP for wasting tax-payers' money, AR Shashikumar, a high court advocate and social activist, described installation of new name boards as a scam.

"Public money is being wasted in an area that is situated at a stone's throw away from the BBMP office. What is the use of BBMP if it allows wastage of funds? The BBMP Chief Commissioner must take suitable measures to avoid wastage of public money. If the BBMP fails to monitor developmental works taken up at Sampangi Rama Nagar how will it monitor developmental works taken up at other wards?" asks Shashikumar.

All the crossroads and the main road have two name boards – one is the old name board and the other one is a recently installed name board. It is quite surprising why the BBMP engineer took the decision to install new name boards. One can understand the need of installing new name boards if the ward name or number is changed due to delimitation of the BBMP.

New, but bad quality

The residents also question the quality of new name boards. They said a few of the newly installed name boards were in a poor condition. For example, the name boards installed on 7th and 8th Cross are either damaged or in a poor condition while the old name boards are in a good condition.

"No one has appealed to the BBMP to install the name boards in the area. One of the new name boards installed on the 3rd Main is already removed and kept away at an isolated place.

What is the use of installing the name boards? Wish the BBMP would not go to such lengths to waste tax-payers' money," said a resident.

The BBMP ward engineer remained unavailable for comment.

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I, Adarsh Katta R/o Mahaveer Ranches A3-603, Sree Sai Layout, Hosa Road, Parappana Agrahara have changed my minor daughter's name from Tanaya to Tanayaa Adarsh Katta

I Mohmad Irfan S/O, Tahir Hasan R/o No 361 Kurubarapete Mulbagal,Kolar 563-131 have changed my name to Mohammad Irfan.

HEALTH TIP: Breastfeeding for six months or more may reduce the risk of cardiovascular problems in mothers for at least 3 years after delivery: A study

Raisins are rich in vitamin C which helps with collagen production and keeps gums healthy

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Food for thought

A nutritionist explains the science behind 'functional' foods

We've all heard that an apple a day keeps the doctor away, but how true is that?

Apples are not high in vitamin A, nor are they beneficial for vision like carrots. They are not a great source of vitamin C and therefore don't fight off colds as oranges do.

However, apples contain various bioactive substances – natural chemicals that occur in small amounts in foods and that have biological effects. These chemicals are not classified as nutrients like vitamins. Because apples contain many health-promoting bioactive substances, the fruit is considered a "functional" food.

For years, I have taught university classes on nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, carbs, proteins and fats. But recently I developed a course specifically on functional foods. The class explores the various bioactive substances in food and how some may even function like a medicine.

Functional foods defined

Functional foods are not the same as superfoods. "Superfood" is a buzzword marketers use to promote foods like kale, spinach and blueberries. Labeling them as "super" appeals to the public and increases sales.

But superfood is generally meant to imply a food that has superior nutritional value and that is high in nutrients that are beneficial for health. For example, salmon and tuna are considered superfoods because the omega-3 fats they contain have been linked to heart health.

Superfood advertisements claim that eating the food will improve some aspect of health. The problem is that most of those claims are not based on scientific research, like the criteria for functional foods are.

In addition to the nutrients that our bodies need for growth and development, functional foods contain a variety of bioactive substances, each with a unique function in the body. The bioactive substances can be found naturally in foods or added while processing.

The list of bioactive components in foods grows daily as research expands.

The carotenoids are the most easily recognisable examples of bioactive substances. They are a group of 850 different pigments that give yellow, orange and red fruits and vegetables their colour. Carotenoids primarily function as antioxidants, which means they promote health by helping to prevent damage to the body's cells. Various individual carotenoids may function in different ways.

Beta-carotene is the most well-known carotenoid because of the high amounts found in carrots. Beta-carotene converts to vitamin A in the body after we consume it. Vitamin A is needed for normal vision. Lutein and zeaxanthin are the yellow carotenoids found in corn and peppers. The two help support vision, especially among older adults.

Research suggests that the carotenoids from foods and the other categories of bioactive substances may help prevent certain cancers and improve heart health. It's important to note that carotenoid-rich fruits and vegetables are associated with reduced risks of cardiovascular disease and some cancers but that carotenoids in supplements offer fewer benefits.

Functional food history

Though the adage about apples and health originated in the 1800s, nutrition is a relatively young science – and the idea of functional foods and bioactive components is even younger.

From the early 1900s to the 1970s, nutrition research focused on vitamin deficiencies. The public was encouraged to eat more vitamin-fortified, processed foods to prevent nutrient deficiency diseases like scurvy, which is caused by a severe vitamin C deficit, or rickets, caused by prolonged vitamin D deficiency.

This emphasis on eating in order to correct nutrient deficiencies had the tendency to cause people to focus on certain nutrients, which can contribute to overeating. This, combined with an increased availability of highly processed foods, resulted in weight gain, which led to increased rates of diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.

> **Carotenoids are easily recognisable bioactive matter. They are a group of 850 pigments that give yellow, orange and red fruits and vegetables their colour**

Japan's focus

Historically, the Japanese were one of the healthiest populations on Earth. However, as the 21st century approached, many Japanese people had adopted the American diet and developed health problems similar to those in the US.

As a result, the Japanese government became concerned about its citizens' expanding waistlines and declining health. To correct this problem, Japan became the first country to introduce the concept of functional foods in the 1980s. Today, Japan uses the phrase "Food for Specialized Health Uses" for products that can be scientifically shown to promote health. It has paid off. Japan has more than 1,000 foods and beverages approved as food for specialised health uses, such as hypoallergenic rice.

Back to apples

An apple's natural dietary fibres are one of the bioactive components that lead to its being classified as a functional food. The fibre pectin is found mainly in an apple's pulp.

Pectin functions to reduce the amount of sugar and fat that is absorbed into the body. This helps reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease.

Apple peels are also packed with fiber that acts as a laxative.

In addition, apples contain high amounts of natural chemicals known as polyphenols that have vital roles in promoting health and reducing chronic disease. More than 8,000 polyphenols have been identified in various plant foods. Because they are mainly in the peel, whole apples are better sources of polyphenols than juice or applesauce.

Anthocyanins are a subclass of the polyphenols that give the apple peel much of its red color. Diets high in anthocyanins help improve heart health and are being studied for use in treating Alzheimer's disease.

Another of the primary polyphenols in apples is phloridzin. Researchers have studied the role of phloridzin in helping to control blood glucose for over 100 years. Recent studies confirm it plays an important role in regulating blood glucose levels by decreasing the amount of glucose absorbed from the small intestine and increasing excretion from the kidneys.

Revisiting the original question

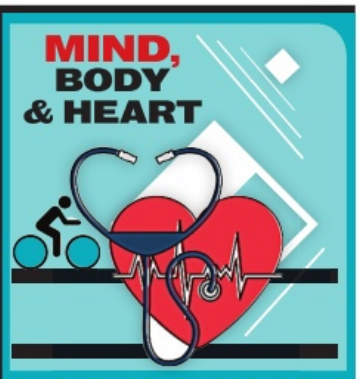
So if apples are functional foods that promote health, do they really help keep the doctor away?

Researchers have tried to figure this out. One U.S. team analyzed the apple-eating patterns and number of doctor visits among more than 8,000 adults. Of those, about 9% ate one apple daily. Once adjusted for demographic and health-related factors, the researchers found that the daily apple eaters used marginally fewer prescription medications than the non-apple eaters. But the number of doctor's visits was about the same between the two groups.

If one apple a day is not enough to make us healthy, what about eating two or three? A group of European researchers found that eating two apples a day improved heart health in 40 adults. And Brazilian investigators found that eating three apples daily improved weight loss and blood glucose levels in 40 overweight women.

While eating an apple a day won't necessarily cut down substantially on prescription medications or doctors visits, it could be one step in the direction of making the transition to eating more healthful, fiber-filled, whole foods.

Apples require no cooking or refrigeration for a week. So next time you are in the grocery store, grab some apples and – if you feel like it – try eating at least one a day. *(Janet Colson, Middle Tennessee State University, The Conversation)*



All you need to know about...

Bad hair day

It's in the genes

Having a bad hair day? Blame your genes, according to the first gene mapping study on human scalp hair whorls. The study, published in the Journal of Investigative Dermatology, showed that hair whorl direction has a genetic basis, but also that it is affected by multiple genes. Researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences in China identified four associated genetic variants that are likely to influence hair whorl direction.

What's a hair whorl?

A hair whorl is a patch of hair growing in a circular pattern around a point specified by hair follicle orientations. As an easily observed human trait, scalp hair whorl pattern is typically defined by the whorl number (single or double whorl) and whorl direction (e.g., clockwise, counterclockwise, or diffuse).

Multiple genes

"We know very little about why we look like we do. Our group has been looking for the genes underlying various interesting traits of physical appearance, including fingerprint patterns, eyebrow thickness, earlobe shape and hair curliness. Hair whorl is one of the traits that we were curious about," said lead investigator Sijia Wang. "The prevailing opinion was that hair whorl direction is controlled by a single gene, exhibiting Mendelian inheritance. However, our results demonstrate that hair whorl direction is influenced by the cumulative effects of multiple genes, suggesting a polygenic inheritance," Wang added.

Genes and hair

These genetic variants are likely to influence hair whorl direction by regulating the cell polarity of hair follicles, with cranial neural tube closure and growth also potentially playing a role. Wang explained that previous studies proposed the hypothesis of associations between hair whorl patterns and abnormal neurological development. —IANS

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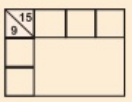
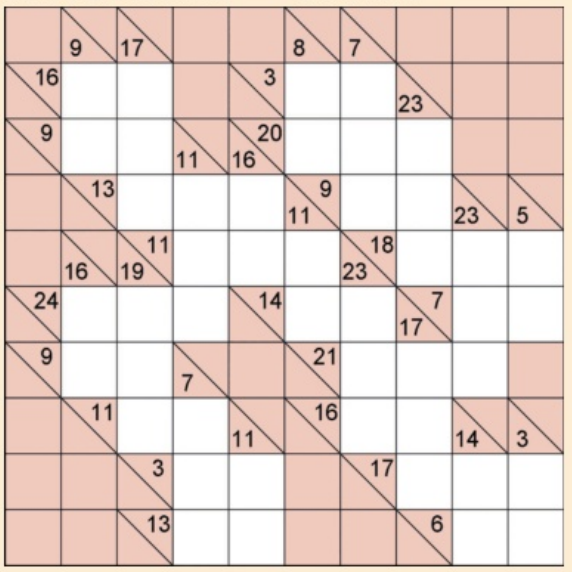
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

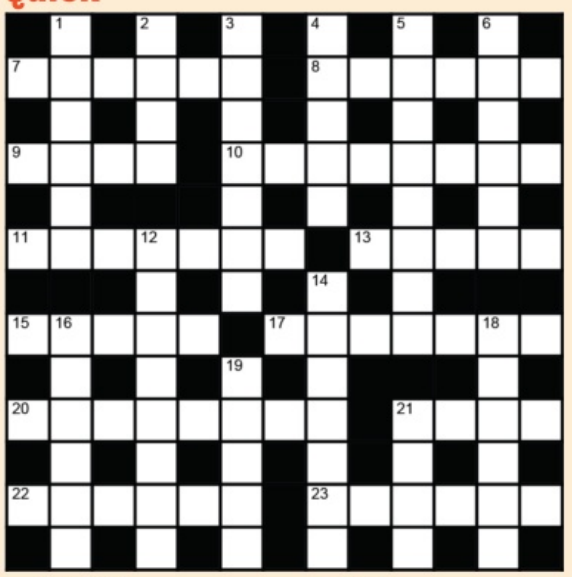
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Giant grass (6)
8 Jewel in the crown? (6)
9 Tartan skirt (4)
10 Creditable or noteworthy attempt? (1,4,3)
11 Soft suede leather (7)
13 Breezy (5)
15 Music drama (5)
17 Associations of sports teams (7)
20 Capital of Hawaii (8)
21 Unit of computer memory (4)
22 Metal pins use as fasteners (6)
23 Aromatic plant eg. fennel (6)

DOWN

1 Profuse (6)
2 Help a felon (4)
3 East European country (7)
4 Turn of phrase (5)
5 Dealing with, controlling (8)
6 Lose one's temper (3,3)
12 Furthermore (8)
14 No longer operational (7)
16 Opposite of loss (6)
18 Involve necessarily (6)
19 Look after the sick (5)
21 Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike in short (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: N EQUALS P

NSTNAS AZKZQU FSSNAL YEKS QT MSEP TM FSECY.

Linemaro

I knew the second I met you that there was something about you I needed. Turns out it wasn't something about you at all. It was just you

Mindchow

Those too smart to enter politics are punished by being governed by those who are dumber

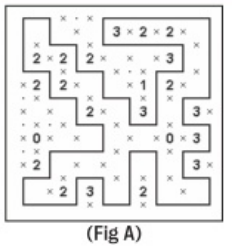
Joke of the day

Roses are red, violets are blue, faces like yours belong in the zoo. Don't be mad, I'll be there, too. Not in the cage, but laughing at you!

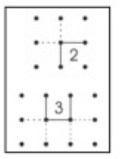
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

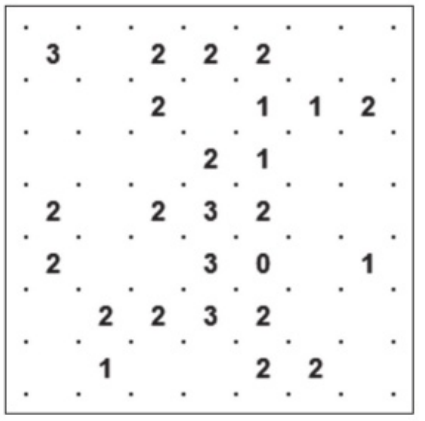


(Fig B) Not Allowed

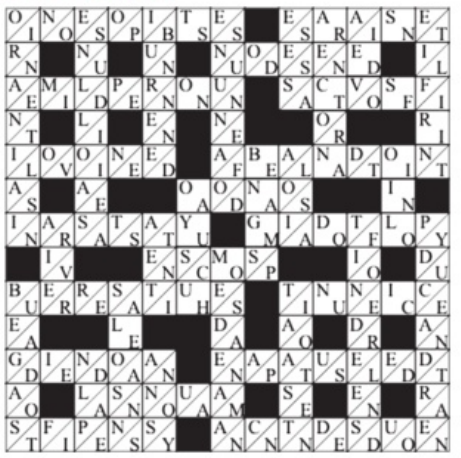
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9			H	

ACROSS

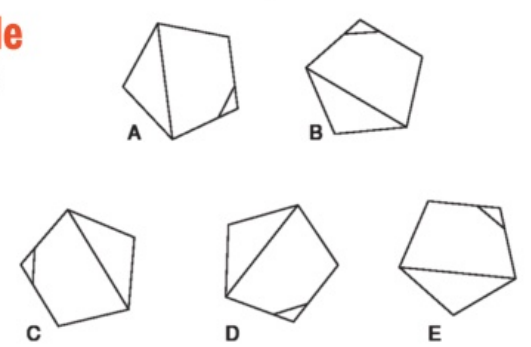
1 Bag ma; 6 Ragas;
7 So gas; 8 Emits;
9 Cathy

DOWN

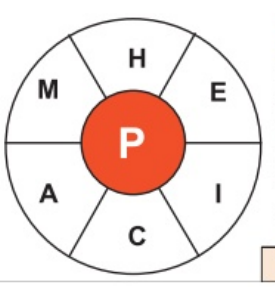
1 Say GS; 2 Am Aga;
3 Gamic; 4 Throb;
5 Sates

Mensapuzzle

Which is the odd one out?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

10 Average; **11** Good; **13** Outstanding

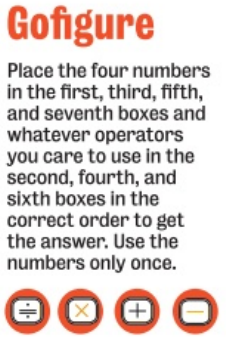
SudokuChallenge

				7				
			1		3			
7		1	6		4	2		8
3	2			6			9	1
	4			9			7	
9	1			8			5	4
8		3	9		5	1		6
			2		6			
				3				

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

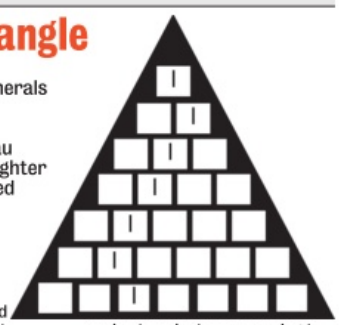
Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Foot is moved. 3. Hand is different. 4. Stripes on sleeve are different. 5. Chair is wider. 6. Chest pocket is added to shirt.

Riddler

Can you decipher this common phrase?
eyeeseeexcept

Alpha triangle

1 Third vowel
2 501 in Roman numerals
3 Pass away
4 American coin
5 Emulated Marceau
6 Definitely less brighter
7 Clipped or cropped



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

I HATE TO DO THIS BECAUSE IT'S SURE SUICIDE, BUT I'VE GOT TO SEND SOMEONE DOWN THERE
WHO DO YOU HAVE THAT'S EXPENDABLE?
WHAT'S THAT GUY'S NAME WHO'S BEEN MAKING SILVER BULLETS AND GETTING SO CHUMMY WITH THE MASKED STRANGER?
5-26
Yates/Casson

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

HAVING MY EARS PIERCED IS A WASTE. FIRST, THERE'S CLEANING. THEN HAVING TO WAIT SIX ENTIRE WEEKS TO CHANGE THEM. AND ON TOP OF IT ALL...
HEY, HEART!
NICE EARRINGS.
THANKS!
DID YOU SEE THAT? A SEVENTH GRADER JUST SAID SHE LIKED MY EARRINGS!
IT WAS ALL WORTH IT.
WHAT WOULD MIDDLE SCHOOL BE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR VALIDATION?
HART OF THE CITY © 2023 JACKIE'S MOMS.
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

WHENEVER I DO SOMETHING LIKE WRITE A CHECK FOR THE WRONG AMOUNT...
I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I'M LOSING IT!
I'LL ADMIT... IT'S CREATED A PIGEON OF DOUBT IN MY MIND.
BATIUK & DAVIS
tombatiuk.com/books

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are blessed by elders. The crunch of the last few days may be resolved now, destiny may be on your side. Your halted projects are likely to start automatically. Money that was stuck may also be recovered. You may also plan a religious trip with family members, which can enhance your inner strength. You might even get a chance for an overseas trip or long-distance travel

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may be affected by a negative moon, which could make you feel upset and arrogant. You should be prepared for sudden and unexpected changes in your daily routine. Your profits might turn into losses, so it is advised to postpone making new investments for a few days. You might find yourself in a stage of self-exploration, which could lead you towards a deeper understanding of life's realities

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you are blessed by the moon. Money that was stuck may now be recovered, enhancing your financial health. You might find yourself in a prominent position in your office, leading a project. There's a likelihood of receiving incentives in terms of promotions. Your understanding of your spouse is likely to improve, fostering domestic harmony.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may resolve many problems with the help of your way of speaking. You might also consider planning for higher studies to enhance your skills, which could prove beneficial for your career shortly. Lovebirds may enjoy their romantic moments. You could gain control over your opponents and rivals. Additionally, you might be considering plans for a house or vehicle loan

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may be busy with your child's education. There's a likelihood of travelling for your child's education. You might also be considering a change in your current job, and planning for higher education to enhance your career. Additionally, you may hear some good news regarding a job interview. Lovebirds could enjoy their happy moments.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you are likely to experience a change in your location or position. It is advised that you carefully read any document before signing it. Be cautious regarding your parents' health. Investing in risky assets may lead to losses, so it is suggested to postpone making investments for a few days.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you are blessed by the moon. You may feel energetic and make quick decisions regarding your business. Your subordinates might assist you in completing your project ahead of schedule, enhancing trust in the environment. Disputes with your siblings could be resolved now. Those in jobs might receive incentives like promotions.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you should control your straightforwardness as it could impact your relationships with the people around you. Consider planning a house renovation and buying artefacts for your home. There's a chance you'll enjoy a social event, which can expand your network. You might also consider investing capital in your family business.

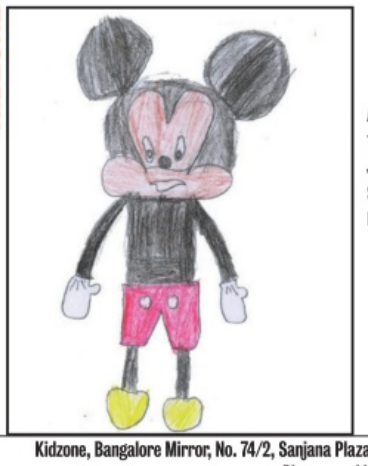
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you may be blessed by the moon. After a sound sleep, you might feel healthy and enjoy each moment. The moon will boost your confidence, which could be reflected in your work. Old health issues could be resolved now. You may also extend help to a needy person, increasing respect for you in your surroundings.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may feel unhappy and dull, which could affect your health and work. There might be delays in completing your current projects, possibly leading to arrogance. It is advised to avoid any adventurous tours or rush driving. Lovebirds may experience a breakup.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you might receive a significant order that could boost your business. Assistance from an influential person could bring you work-related advantages, possibly leading to promotions. Job seekers may secure suitable positions. Consider planning renovations for your house or office to elevate your status. You may also enjoy romantic moments with your loved one.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you might be busy with work, and an overload of tasks could leave you mentally tired. You might not have the opportunity to fully enjoy a family event or could arrive very late, potentially affecting domestic harmony. Your efficiency could be praised by your seniors, which might pave the way for a promotion in your current job.

KIDZONE



Akkhil S,
10 Years,
Jnana
Sweekar
Public School

S Bharga V,
5 Years,
Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
((25/4)/100) * 1600 + ((25/2)/100) * 800 =
(6.25/100) * 1600 + (12.5/100) * 800 =
0.0625 * 1600 + 0.125 * 800 =
[100 + 100 = 200]

RIDDLER
I before E except after C

QUOTE UNCODE
People living deeply have no fear of death.

FAST FIVE

G	A	M	B	A
A	G	A	R	S
S	A	G	O	S
S	M	I	T	E
Y	A	C	H	T

STRIKE OUT

I	N	S	P	I	T	E	E	R	A	S	E
R	U	N	N	O	S	E	D	L		
A	I	L	E	R	O	N	S	C	O	F	F
N	L	E		E	O		I			
I	V	I	E	D	A	B	A	N	D	O	N
A	E		O	D	A	S		I		
N	A	S	A	U	G	A	D	F	L	Y	
	I		N	C	O	S		O	U	
B	R	E	A	T	H	E	T	U	N	I	C
A		N		E		D		O	D	A	
G	E	N	O	A	E	P	A	U	L	E	T
A	N	N	U	M	S		E		A		
T	I	P	S	Y		A	C	T	E	D	O	N

QUICK

		T		R		E		T		P		L
	R	I	V	E	T	S		C	U	M	M	I	N
	F		V		R		N		B		A	
H	O	N	O	L	U	L	U		B	Y	T	E
O	P	E	R	A		L	E	A	G	U	E	S
		R		E		N		F		N		
		O		A		D						
C	H	A	M	O	I	S		W	I	N	D	Y
		S		N		M		L		E		
K	I	L	T		A	G	O	O	D	T	R	Y
	V		E		M		I		N		E	
B	A	M	B	O	O		D	I	A	D	E	M
	L	A		B		I		H		S		

MENSA PUZZLE
B: the rest are the same figure rotated

BULL'S EYE
camp, cape, champ, cheap, chimp, chip, epic, heap, hemp, IMPEACH, pace, peach, pica

SUDOKU

2	3	6	8	7	9	4	1	5
5	8	4	1	2	3	9	6	7
7	9	1	6	5	4	2	3	8
3	2	5	4	6	7	8	9	1
8	7	3	9	4	5	1	2	6
9	1	7	3	8	2	6	5	4
6	4	8	5	9	1	3	7	2
4	5	9	2	1	6	7	8	3
1	6	2	7	3	8	5	4	9

ALPHA TRIANGLE
I, Di, Die, Dime, Mimed, Dimmer, Trimmed.

GO FIGURE
Easy
6 − 4 + 3 − 3 = 2
Medium
5 × 4 + 7 − 8 = 19
Hard
9 − 7 × 6 + 6 = 18

LOOP

KAKURO

Slow & steady

Yami says she is not good at marketing, would rather just work hard on her skill

Yami Gautam has been making some really bold choices as an actor in the last few years - right from 'Uri: The Surgical Strike'. The actress was last seen in varied projects on OTT like 'A Thursday' and 'Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga'. At the moment, Yami is getting some great feedback for her role in 'OMG 2', alongside Pankaj Tripathi and Akshay Kumar. As she is getting all the praise from netizens for her act as a lawyer in the film, someone pointed out to her that she's under-utilised.

A user wrote, "It's amazing how each and every time @yamigautam manages to SURPRISE us with her performance! #OMG2 is no exception. She owns each and every frame she's in! Even her silence speaks a lot. I hate the term 'underrated'. I'd just say she's under-utilised by our filmmakers."

The actress responded to this with a long note. Yami pointed out that within the industry, people who market their talent are sometimes noticed more and she doesn't do that. "Some people find success overnight, some people have to prove themselves persistently for years. Some people are great at marketing their talent (or lack of it), some people only want their talent to speak. As an actor I just know how to act and work exceptionally hard on identifying good scripts and versatile characters, that's my talent."

She further added, "I don't understand or get involved much with marketing of my talent. Unfortunately for the majority of our industry everything relies on marketing of a person or project and not on the depth of a script or character. Maybe that's the reason why people feel I am under-utilised. Anyways, Thanks so much Aavishkar for your kind words, it's truly very encouraging. I will get there eventually, slowly but steadily, one film at a time." **-ETimes**

On Sridevi's 60th birth anniversary

Search engine giant Google on Sunday celebrated the 60th birth anniversary of Indian cinema icon Sridevi with a special doodle dedicated to her on-screen charisma.

Born on this day in 1963 in present-day Tamil Nadu, Sridevi fell in love with movies as a child and started acting at the age of four making her debut with the Tamil movie "Kandhan Karunai".

"Today's Doodle, illustrated by Mumbai-based guest artist Bhumika Mukherjee, celebrates Indian actress Sridevi's 60th birthday! Starring in nearly three hundred movies over the course of four decades, Sridevi made Bollywood's sweeping dramas and comedies shine, oftentimes without a male counterpart in a traditionally male-dominated industry," said the search engine in its description of the doodle.

Sridevi learned multiple South Indian languages, which helped her to break into other film industries . **-PTI**

Another hat

Ester Noronha, who has become a jack of all trades, is gung-ho about the release of her latest bilingual movie The Vacant House. Ester, a multi-lingual actress, has played multiple roles – heroine, director, and music director – in The Vacant House that is made in Kannada and Konkani.

"I never worked as an associate under any director. Many directors, who observed my keenness during the shooting, told me that I have the potential to become a director. I had a lot of time during the lockdown. I spent time writing the script and screenplay for this movie. Finally, I handled the megaphone for this movie. It was not difficult since I love helming this movie," says Ester.

About how she took up the responsibility of scoring the music, Ester said she was very good in music since her school days. "I took up the music director's role as someone who is supposed to do that but did not turn up due to some reasons. This film has two songs – one is peppy and the other one emotional," she said.

With this, Ester joins the list of women directors in Sandalwood. "The Vacant House is an unusual love story that has various angles including love, desire, and commitment. The movie will be relatable to the audiences. Its shooting was held at a farmhouse and in Mangaluru," she said.

Ester has acted in 35 Telugu movies and some Tamil movies and Kannada movies including Lanke, DNA, and Local Train. "If all goes well, we are planning to release the movie in October. The shooting of the movie is completed and post-production work is in progress," she said.

– Y Maheswara Reddy

Visiting Maui? Don't do it now: Jason Mamoa

Jason Mamoa, who had recently sent his condolences to Maui residents suffering from raging wildfires, has now warned tourists to not go to the Hawaiian island due to the damage caused by the unpredictable wildfires.

The 'Aquaman' actor, who is from Hawaii, took to Instagram to warn travellers who might be planning to visit Maui in the wake of the devastating wildfire that swept through Lahaina this week, killing at least 60 people and causing property damage worth billions. He wrote: "Maui is not the place to have your vacation right now. DO NOT TRAVEL TO MAUI. Do not convince yourself that your presence is needed on an island that is suffering this deeply. Mahalo to everyone who has donated and shown aloha to the community in this time of need."

'Moana' star Auli'i Cravalho similarly wrote on Instagram: "DO NOT TRAVEL TO HAWAI'I UNLESS YOU ARE RENDING AID … Your vacation can wait." She added: "I feel numb and close to tears. Of all the natural disasters we have faced; earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis and flooding…to say we were under-prepared for this disaster is an understatement." **-IANS**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Trailer out

The trailer of Kannada movie Parimala D'souza was released on Saturday at Miraj Cinemas situated on Magadi Road at Sunkadakatte. Parimala D'souza's three songs were released by former chief ministers BS Yediyurappa, HD Kumaraswamy, and Siddaramaiah last year (when he wasn't CM).

"The movie's trailer was released by Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce president Ba Ma Hareesh. We will release one more song written by Jayant Kaikini and sung by Nakul Abhyankar and Supriya Ram shortly. The movie is scheduled for release on September 15," said Vinod Sheshadri, who bankrolled the movie.

Sheshadri, basically a software engineer, said that he also plays a police inspector in the movie. "It all happened when I joined the National Academy of Cinema and Television owned by Giridhar HT. I had training in acting for six months. I agreed to bankroll the movie directed by Giridhar. It is a suspense story and has all ingredients to entertain the audiences," said Sheshadri.

He said the shooting of the movie and post-production works are completed. "The movie got a UA certificate from the Central Board of Film Certification. It is about a Hindu and Christian couple who lead a happy life. Two years into the marriage, the woman gets killed. Who is the killer is what Parimala D'souza is all about," he said.

The movie was shot at Bengaluru, Bidadi, Hassan, Nelamangala, Kanakapura, and Vidyaranyapura for 72 days.